

ABSTRACT

This research report provides a framework to assess the value of private-public partnerships (PPPs) in shaping the regulatory framework of the food safety regime within southern Africa. As one of Africa's largest economies and major exporting countries, South Africa provides a clear case for analysing how developing countries in Africa have adopted and enforce international standards relating to the safety of foodstuffs that are produced, distributed and sold. Within the international systems, governments are generally held responsible for the ratification of international treaties that inform global standards and are criticised or excluded when they fail to comply. However, the role of private sector in supporting and enforcing food safety practices has not been evaluated in any meaningful way. The aim of this research is further the understanding of how PPPs have formed in South Africa and to what extent they have had a positive impact on the advancement of food safety between the years 2000 and 2015. With the help of document analysis and a review of the current regulatory framework, this research is framed within the concept of hybridity and allows us to better understand the focus of PPPs within South Africa's food safety regime. The main conclusion is that South Africa's commitment to food safety is strong but the relevant policy remains uncoordinated and undefined. South African businesses and the government are involved at the international level in terms of standards-setting and are aware of the global food safety strategy. The primary reason for this is that the country's involvement improves trade prospects and affirms its role as a collaborative actor within the International Food Safety Complex (IFSC). However, South Africa still experiences several issues relating to food safety risks that affect trade and challenge the efficacy of existing food safety regulations. The recommendation is that public and private sectors should invest more capital and capacity in establishing a comprehensive food safety policy that brings together legislation, identifies key actors and provides a guideline to improve transparency and accountability relating to food safety issues in South Africa.

Key words: *Codex Alimentarius, food safety, food safety risks, hybridity, international food safety complex, public-private partnerships, SPS Agreement, TBT Agreement*